



HEELING AREA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

# The Lookout

Volume 21 Issue 4

Winter 2012 Newsletter Issue

*Our mission is to preserve the history of the people who have gone before us.*

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## The last thing you will get from 2012 is this Newsletter:

Our monthly meeting will be held in the Library's Auditorium at 1:00PM on the following dates in 2013:

**January 12, February 9, March 9, May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14, October 12 and November 9.**

**Starting in 2013** during our meeting will be announced persons inquiring research from WAGS, as well as, e-mailing members interested in knowing the inquiries.

## Those interested in helping Mr. Forrester . . .

Mr Harry Forrester was our October 2012 speaker. His interest in Whitegate Cemetery and Moundsville Prison was spurred by genealogy research. His family genealogy began with relatives born in 1802 who resided in Tyler County. This lead to searching for individual and his discovery of the prison's history and how poorly kept their death records were. Records indicated at least one and perhaps two cemeteries existed prior to Whitegate Cemetery. And thus the search began.



Mr. Forrester has graciously shared with WAGS his database of deaths and death related information about Whitegate Cemetery and Moundsville Prison. We will have copies in the Wheeling Room of internments. Mr. Forrester is looking for help in making sure that his details are correct and as complete as possible. Mr. Forrester's direct e-mail address is: [harryfarr@aol.com](mailto:harryfarr@aol.com)

On the next page is Mr. Forrester's October Outline . . .

Our Homepage: <http://www.wvgenweb.org/ohio/index.htm>

Our email: [wagswv@gmail.com](mailto:wagswv@gmail.com)

## Outline for Ohio County Genealogy presentation 10/19/2012

1. On 2/7/1866 State Senate approved bill to build a prison. At this time county jails were used to house all state felons and executions were carried out at each county jail location.
2. The Ohio County jail located on 12th street was chosen to be a temporary state prison at this time. However it proved to lack an ability to house and control the sheer number required. Wheeling being the state capital at this time heavily influenced the selection of a board of directors chosen to manage the proposed prison in Moundville and its warden George McFadden.
3. Ten acres of land in Moundville was purchased from the Lockwood and Edwards families on 6/1/1866. This site was on the corner of now 8th and Jefferson Streets. The first construction on this site was a wooden stockade 24 x 100 feet which was used to house the prisoners who would construct the prison. The prison consisted of cell blocks which are surrounded by massive stone walls on four sides. Behind the actual prison complex was a recreation yard. This area in 1877 was used to build factories for contract labor projects. By 1876 the initial prison construction was completed.
4. Prior to about 1923 no adequate burial records exist regarding disposition of unclaimed prisoners who died at Moundville. The first recorded death was Woodsen L. Crews on 3/17/1868. He was shot and killed during an escape attempt.
5. The earliest recorded burials, per county death records, occurred from mid 1890 to late 1890. Five death records state their burials took place in the prison yard?
6. The Warden's 1890 Biennial Report indicated prisoners at that time were being buried along the south prison wall, just outside of the prison. However, due to drainage issues he requested funds and approval to purchase five acres south of the area. They needed to exhume the present burials and grade the existing area to alleviate drainage issues. The new ground was to be used as a cemetery and existing burials were to be exhumed. This land was purchased 7/19/1892 from W.L. Edwards. However at this point I have been unable to prove if bodies were moved.
7. A State Senate bill was enacted on 2/26/1897 that prohibited the burial of prisoners within the city limits of Moundville. This act most likely was in response to local residents expressing concerns and fear of the large number of prisoner who died from tuberculosis.
8. The Senate in response to this law directed the Board of Control to purchase not more than ten acres of ground outside the city limits. Ten acres were found and purchase implemented. However, due to errors in the act, the purchase from Mr. David Levi could not be finalized until December 15, 1898!
9. A prison death log began on 6/01/1923 with Clarence Parks and continues up to this date. The book evolved throughout the years and contains their name, death date, cause of death and disposition of body. This book contained 842 individuals with 224 reportedly buried at Whitegate Cemetery, Tom's Run.
10. The big question for me is what happened to those who died between 2/26/1897 when prisoners could no longer be buried in Moundville and 6/1/1923 the first recorded burial in Whitegate Cemetery? Per records a small amount who died went to Mt. Rose Cemetery in Moundville.
11. The Board of Directors existed up to 1909 after which the Board of Control was established. They oversaw operations of many state institutions including the prison, asylums and various schools including West Virginia University. Because of this tie at least 127 prisoners who died and whose bodies were not claimed, were sent to WVU medial center for research. This started in January 1921 with Henry Harbor and continued into the 1950's. The present location of Ruby Hospital was a pauper's cemetery and this was where the prisoners were buried. In 1959 when school was expanded the bodies were exhumed and moved to a new pauper's cemetery on nearby West Run Road. The site is unmarked and the prisons are buried in a community grave per the local Hastings Funeral Home.
12. An article published May 2, 1992 in Wheeling News Register by George Belanus lists 237 people buried in Whitegate. This list appears to be recorded in sequential order per present markers. The death book maintained by the prison only shows 225 people in Whitegate.
13. The survey taken by me on August 2012 has 177 graves based on present markers.
14. Via either county or state death certificate 212 people can be confirmed at Whitegate and another 30 people likely.
15. I have deaths listed in 1890,1894,1896,1898 and 1900 Biennial Reports but burial location is unknown.

## From the Marion County Genealogical Club newsletter:

Genealogists will often attempt to determine when and why their ancestor(s) immigrated to the United States as well as establish where they came from. From the earliest colonial days, America has experienced a number of surges in immigrants arriving from all over the world for various reasons. The table below, based on data compiled by Rachel Kilbourne and published in Ancestry Magazine (March/April 2006), provides a summary of the WHO, WHERE, WHEN and WHY for many of our ancestors who left their ancestral homes for what they hoped would be a better life in America.

Armenia	1901-1910	Religious persecution
Austro-Hungarian Empire	1880-1914	Ethnic tension; mandatory military service
China	Mid 1880s	Famine; epidemics; repression, civil wars, gold rush
Cuba & Puerto Rico	1959-1961	Castro's revolution
	1966	Cuban Refugee Act permits more than 400,000 people to enter U.S.
East Prussia	1871-1880	Religious tension as Prussia became part of Germany
England	1600s	Overcrowding (excess population sent to the new world)
	1870 & 1881-1890	Overcrowding and poverty; skilled laborers seeking better opportunities
France	1851	Political refugees from 1848 revolution
Germany	1683-1820	Religious persecution; wars; hardships
	1820-1871	Escaping war & military service
	1843-1859	Crop failure; unsuccessful German Revolution (1848)
	1865-1874	Skilled workers transferred to U.S. companies; German Catholics expelled
	1871-1914	Religious persecution; political unrest
Greece	Early-Mid 1900s	Religious persecution
Ireland	1847-1860	Potato famine
	1881-1890	Continued crop failure; political & religious contention
Italy	1891-1910	Low wages; high taxes; poverty; desire to own land
Korea	Early 1900s	Racial tension
Mexico	1980 to present	Jobs; economic opportunity
Poland	1880-1914	Jews escaping religious persecution; Poles escaping 'Russification'
Russia	1901-1910	Violence & riots (targeting Gypsies & Jews)
Scandinavia	1881-1900	Crop failure; unemployment; seeking opportunity
Vietnam	1975	Economic conditions; fall of Saigon

**Only a genealogist regards a step backwards as progress.**



## The WAGS Projects Update . . .



**Unscheduled needs:** We are in need of individuals willing to give a few hours from time to time on various projects for the good of the organization. Please consider helping a little to make lighter work for others. Contact us at [wagswv@gmail.com](mailto:wagswv@gmail.com)

**Scheduled needs:** We are in need of individuals who could work specific hours in the Wheeling Room. It greatly helps individuals who are doing research to have someone point them in the general direction of information that we have available. Please consider helping out. Contact us at [wagswv@gmail.com](mailto:wagswv@gmail.com)

### CEMETERIES . . .

This project continues and should have some examples in the next few months. We continue to gather local cemeteries information and merging them together into one source for all interments. We currently have over 26,000 names in our starter database. Some of the Cemeteries currently in the database are Mount Wood, Mount Zion, Mount Calvary, Our Lady of Seven Dolours, Stone Church and Peninsula. This will allow us to better serve people doing research and getting them pointed into the right direction for their deceased loved ones. This will allow us to printout by name, cemetery, date etc.

### OBITUARIES . . .

We are continuing to maintain the Obituary Files in the Basement of the Library. We are in need of some additional help on this project, and it is getting close to being caught up with a project that will never end.

## REMEMBER . . . NEW YEAR . . . ANNUAL DUES

### WHEELING AREA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership in the Wheeling Area Genealogical Society is \$10.00 per individual for the year from January 1 to December 31. Membership includes the newsletter, *LOOKOUT*, published in March, June, September and December. Back issues of the membership year will be mailed on receipt of dues. Inquiries \$1 a surname to non-members, free to members. Meetings are 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month at 1:00pm at the Ohio County Public Library, Wheeling WV. There is NO December meeting. Make checks payable to WHEELING AREA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, P.O. Box 6450, Wheeling WV 26003-6450

#### PLEASE PRINT THE BELOW INFORMATION

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